

Dr. Roger Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 25, Existentialism Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 25, Existentialism, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This document contains excerpts from **Dr. Roger Green's "Reformation to the Present" church history course, specifically Lecture 25 on Existentialism**. The lecture begins by introducing **key figures in existentialism like Søren Kierkegaard, Rudolf Bultmann, and Paul Tillich**, outlining their contributions and how existentialist thought moved from its Christian origins. Green then discusses **core features, strengths, and criticisms of existentialism**, drawing connections to its influence in the academic world. Finally, the lecture transitions to the topic of **ecumenism, its historical roots in Protestant divisions, the drive for unity, and the formation of the World Council of Churches**, followed by a brief introduction to **Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his theological emphasis on ecclesiology**.

2. 26 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 25 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Church History → Reformation to the Present).



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3. Briefing Document: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 25, Existentialism

Briefing Document: Theological Developments - Existentialism, Ecumenism, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Course: Reformation to the Present (Lecture 25) **Lecturer:** Dr. Roger Green **Date:** 2024

Sources: Excerpts from "Green_RefToPresent_EN_Sess25.pdf"

I. Existentialism

Main Theme: This section introduces existentialism as a significant theological development, tracing its roots from a Christian perspective with Søren Kierkegaard to its more secular expressions in the 20th century. It explores the core features of existentialism, its potential strengths, and key criticisms from a Christian theological standpoint.

Most Important Ideas and Facts:

- **Origins in Christian Thought:** Existentialism began with the work of Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), a "Christian existentialist." Kierkegaard recognized the "limits to human reason" and emphasized the importance of the individual's heart, emotion, and whole person in grappling with human dilemmas.
- **Shift Away from Christian Roots:** While Kierkegaard was a Christian, existentialism in the 20th century largely "became divorced from its Christian roots."
- **Key Representatives:**
Søren Kierkegaard: Considered the originator of Christian existentialism, focusing on personal experience and the limits of reason. His book *Fear and Trembling* exemplifies his exploration of profound personal dilemmas.
Rudolf Bultmann (New Testament Scholar): Applied existentialist hermeneutics to the New Testament. He defined "sin" as "an inauthentic existence" and "salvation" as a "redeemed existence." He is also known for his concept of "demythologization," viewing events like the resurrection not as literal occurrences but as "an Easter faith coming into the life of the disciples of Jesus."
- **Paul Tillich (Theologian):** Applied existentialist categories to theology. He believed theology should address the "meaninglessness, or despair, or anxiety" of the modern world. He defined God as "the ground of our being," providing

authenticity in the face of "non-being." While initially a Christian theologian, Tillich later saw all religions as equally valid answers to fundamental human questions.

- **Basic Features of Existentialism: Centrality of Human Beings:** A highly "anthropocentric" movement focused on individual experience, meaninglessness, despair, and anxiety.
- **Obscurity of God:** Unlike the imminent God of liberalism or the transcendent God of neo-orthodoxy, existentialism often presents an "obscure God," difficult to understand or grasp.
- **Inevitability of Anxiety:** Life in the world is seen as inherently filled with anxiety, potentially linked to the difficulty in knowing God.
- **Goal of Authentic Existence:** Existentialism seeks "authentic existence," though without a grounding in God, this goal becomes problematic and cyclical, leading back to anxiety and despair.
- **Strengths of Existentialism: Truth as Both Outward and Inward:** It highlights that "truth is also inwardly experienced" and understood through personal experience.
- **Recognition of Unique Individuals:** It emphasizes the uniqueness of individuals, cautioning against objectifying people in "I-it" relationships in favor of "I-thou" relationships (drawing on Martin Buber's ideas).
- **Honesty About Disbelief:** It acknowledges that "a belief in God, for a lot of people, is difficult" and that some see church practices as mere habit.
- **Willingness to Face the Problems of Life, Including Death:** It confronts the reality of death, a key driver of existentialist themes.
- **Recognition of Shallow and Meaningless Lives:** It acknowledges that many people live "shallow, hollow, and meaningless" lives.
- **Criticisms of Existentialism: Humanism:** Post-Kierkegaardian existentialism often became a form of "humanism," placing humans at the center rather than God. "We do not need a theology with us as the center. God's the center of the story."
- **Failure to Understand the True Nature of People:** It looks at people from their own perspective of meaninglessness rather than from "God's perspective."

- **Lack of a Doctrine of Sin:** It largely ignores "original sin" and "actual sin of rebellion against God," hindering the understanding of grace. "If you don't have a strong doctrine of sin, you won't have a strong doctrine of grace."
- **Problematic View of the Bible:** Many existentialists "ignore the Bible," seeing it as unhelpful rather than central to life.

II. Ecumenism

Main Theme: This section explores the ecumenical movement within Protestantism, its motivations, historical developments, and eventual institutionalization, while also offering a critical perspective on its current state.

Most Important Ideas and Facts:

- **Definition:** Ecumenism concerns the "unity of the church," primarily beginning within Protestantism before reaching out to Catholicism and Orthodoxy.
- **Reasons for Divided Protestantism (Early 20th Century):**
Theological Divisions: Differences in theological beliefs.
- **Social Divisions:** Issues like nationalism and ethical concerns, with slavery in the 19th century US as a prime example.
- **Economic Divisions:** Disparities between rich and poor Protestants.
- **Individualism:** An emphasis on the individual and privatization in the Western world contributed to division.
- **Growing Recognition of the Need for Unity:**
Theological Imperative: Recognition of biblical calls for unity, particularly Ephesians 4:4-6, which emphasizes unity centered on Jesus Christ.
- **Missionary Conscience:** Missionaries realized that denominationalism might be overshadowing the primary goal of bringing people to Christ. The **World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh (1910)**, led by Methodist layperson John Mott, was a key event.
- **Social Problems and Secularism:** A need for a unified Protestant voice to address social issues and the rise of secularism.
- **Impact of World War II:** The experience of facing tyrannies like Nazi Germany highlighted the need for a united Christian stance.

- **Institutionalization of Ecumenism: World Council of Churches (WCC):** Formed in Amsterdam in **1948** as a Protestant initiative aimed at unity.
- **National Council of Churches (NCC):** Began forming in **1950**, with the US NCC as an example.
- **Shift in Focus and Criticisms:** While founded with "very good theological intentions" and a biblical basis, the lecturer believes that the WCC and NCC have largely "forgotten their biblical loyalties" and no longer operate with clear biblical authority. This has led to the formation of more biblically centered groups.
- **Personal Experience:** The lecturer recounts his experience at the North American Ecumenical Youth Assembly in 1960, noting it as an interesting and inspiring event despite the ecumenical movement already "drifting." He appreciated the opportunity to interact with diverse denominations and engage in Bible studies.
- **Importance of Remembrance:** Despite current criticisms, ecumenism remains an important theological development to remember.

III. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Main Theme: This section introduces Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a significant theologian who emerged during the tumultuous period of Nazi Germany. It provides biographical background and outlines key aspects of his theology, particularly his ecclesiology.

Most Important Ideas and Facts:

- **Biographical Background (1906-1945):** Born into a wealthy and established German family. His father was a prominent psychiatrist.
- Became a leader in the underground **Confessing Church**, which resisted the Nazified Lutheran Church that had pledged allegiance to Hitler. He was involved in the **Barmen Declaration**.
- Initially a convinced pacifist, he later participated in a plot to assassinate Hitler, believing the Nazi regime had become an illegitimate government.
- Arrested and imprisoned, eventually hanged by the Gestapo on April 9, 1945.
- Experienced a personal shift towards deeper faith and regular church attendance in his teenage years, against initial family expectations (most family members pursued medicine or law).
- Mentored by Karl Barth.

- **Theology - Ecclesiology (Doctrine of the Church):** Bonhoeffer analyzed the church from both theological and sociological perspectives.
- **Church as Community:** He emphasized the importance of the church as a "community" that "stands over the individual," contrasting with the increasing individualism he observed. "Christianity is a very personal religion, but it's never a private religion."
- **Relationship to the Word:** He asserted that "to be in the church is to be in the Word of God. And to be in the Word of God is to be in the church." The two are inseparable.
- **Church and the World:** The church should not be a "monastic community apart from the world" but is "called to responsible action within the world, and in the sufferings of the world." His experiences in America, particularly observing the suffering of the Black community in Harlem, influenced this view. He believed the church should suffer with the suffering, exemplified by the Jewish community in Nazi Germany.
- **Cheap Grace vs. Costly Grace:** He contrasted "cheap grace" (superficial faith with no sacrifice) with "costly grace" (taking God's Word and the demands of Christ seriously, embodying discipleship). His book, **The Cost of Discipleship**, begins with the powerful statement: "Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our church. We're fighting today for costly grace." The lecturer strongly recommends this book as essential Christian literature.

Further Discussion: The lecture indicates that Bonhoeffer's theology will be explored further in subsequent sessions, including a video presentation titled "Memories and Perspectives."

4. Study Guide: Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 25, Existentialism

Existentialism, Ecumenism, and Bonhoeffer: A Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to the lecture, who is considered the starting point of existentialism, and why is he described as a "Christian existentialist"?
2. Explain Rudolf Bultmann's existentialist interpretation of sin and salvation. What is the key concept associated with his approach to the New Testament?
3. How did Paul Tillich apply existentialist categories to theology? What was his concept of God, and what were the fundamental problems he believed theology should address?
4. Describe two basic features of existentialism as presented in the lecture, and briefly explain how these features developed after Kierkegaard.
5. Identify two strengths of existentialism that the lecturer highlights, explaining the valuable insights these strengths offer.
6. What are two key criticisms of existentialism raised in the lecture, particularly concerning its view of humanity and theology?
7. What were the primary reasons for the division within Protestantism at the beginning of the 20th century, according to the lecture?
8. Describe two factors that contributed to the growing recognition of the need for unity among Protestants, eventually leading to the ecumenical movement.
9. What significant organization was formed in 1948 as an institutional expression of the ecumenical movement? Briefly describe its initial focus.
10. Briefly describe Dietrich Bonhoeffer's background and his initial stance on pacifism. What significant event led him to reconsider this stance and become involved in a plot against Hitler?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Soren Kierkegaard is considered the starting point of existentialism. He is described as a "Christian existentialist" because he recognized the limits of

human reason and believed that individuals must grapple with life's dilemmas through faith and personal experience, rooted in his Christian beliefs.

2. For Rudolf Bultmann, sin was defined as an "inauthentic existence," meaning not living according to God's intended purpose, and salvation was a "redeemed existence," where one's life is made whole by God. The key concept associated with Bultmann is "demythologization," his approach to removing mythical elements from the New Testament to reveal its existential message.
3. Paul Tillich applied existentialist categories to theology by arguing that saving theology must address the anxieties and meaninglessness of modern life. His concept of God was that of the "ground of our being," the source that overcomes the threat of non-being and grants authentic existence.
4. Two basic features of existentialism are the centrality of human beings (an anthropocentric focus on individual anxiety and meaning) and the obscurity of God (a distant or incomprehensible divine being). These features became more pronounced after Kierkegaard as existentialism became divorced from its Christian roots.
5. Two strengths of existentialism are its emphasis on inward, subjective experience as a source of truth and its recognition of the uniqueness of individuals, cautioning against objectification. These insights highlight the personal dimension of truth and the importance of treating individuals as "thou" rather than "it."
6. Two key criticisms of existentialism are its anthropocentric humanism that often forgets God as the center of theology and its failure to adequately address the concept of sin, particularly original sin and rebellion against God. This neglect impacts its understanding of grace and the human condition.
7. The primary reasons for the division within Protestantism at the beginning of the 20th century were theological differences, social divisions (such as nationalism and ethical issues like slavery), economic disparities between rich and poor Protestants, and the rising individualism and privatization in the Western world.
8. Two factors that contributed to the growing recognition of the need for unity were the experiences of missionaries in the field who recognized the priority of making Christians over denominational converts, and the need to present a united front against increasing social problems and secularism in the world.
9. The World Council of Churches was formed in Amsterdam in 1948 as an institutional expression of the ecumenical movement. Its initial focus was on

fostering unity among Protestant denominations, though it later broadened to include Orthodox and Catholic participation.

10. Dietrich Bonhoeffer was born into a wealthy and established German family and initially held a strong conviction towards pacifism as a pastor and theologian. However, the rise of the Nazi regime and his realization that it was no longer a legitimate government ordained by God led him to abandon his pacifist stance and become involved in a plot to assassinate Hitler.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the transition of existentialism from its Christian origins in Kierkegaard to its later secular forms as represented by thinkers like Sartre and Kafka. What were the key theological and philosophical shifts that occurred during this development?
2. Compare and contrast the existentialist understanding of God with the concepts of God in Protestant liberalism and neo-orthodoxy as presented in the lecture. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective in relation to traditional Christian theology?
3. Discuss the strengths and criticisms of existentialism outlined in the lecture. In what ways can Christian theology learn from existentialism, and where does it fundamentally diverge?
4. Examine the various factors that contributed to the rise of the ecumenical movement within Protestantism. To what extent were theological, social, and historical forces responsible for this push towards unity?
5. Evaluate the significance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer as a theological figure in the 20th century, focusing on his concept of the church and the distinction between "cheap grace" and "costly grace." How did his theological convictions intersect with his engagement in the political realities of Nazi Germany?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Anthropocentric:** Focused on human beings as the central or most important aspect of existence.
- **Authentic Existence:** In existentialism, a state of living genuinely and taking responsibility for one's choices and existence, often in the face of meaninglessness.
- **Cheap Grace:** According to Bonhoeffer, grace understood as merely the forgiveness of sins without the call to discipleship and obedience.
- **Costly Grace:** According to Bonhoeffer, grace that calls for discipleship, obedience to Christ's commands, and a willingness to suffer.
- **Demythologization:** The hermeneutical approach, notably associated with Rudolf Bultmann, that seeks to interpret the mythical elements of the New Testament in terms of their existential meaning rather than as historical events.
- **Existentialism:** A philosophical and theological movement that emphasizes individual existence, freedom, and choice. It often grapples with themes of meaninglessness, anxiety, and the search for authentic selfhood.
- **Ground of Being:** A theological concept, particularly associated with Paul Tillich, referring to God as the fundamental power and source of all existence.
- **Hermeneutics:** The theory and practice of interpretation, especially of biblical texts.
- **Imminence of God:** The theological concept that God is actively present and involved in the world and human affairs (emphasized in Protestant liberalism).
- **Inauthentic Existence:** In existentialism, a state of living falsely or avoiding genuine selfhood and responsibility. For Bultmann, it was equated with sin.
- **Neo-orthodoxy:** A theological movement that reacted against liberal theology, emphasizing the transcendence of God and the authority of scripture (associated with Karl Barth)..
- **Transcendence of God:** The theological concept that God is beyond and independent of the material universe and human comprehension (emphasized in neo-orthodoxy).

5. FAQs Green, Reformation to the Present, Session 25, Existentialism, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Existentialism FAQ

1. What is existentialism, and what are its origins according to this lecture?

Existentialism is a philosophical and theological movement that emphasizes individual existence, freedom, and choice. It posits that existence precedes essence, meaning that humans are born without inherent purpose and must create their own meaning through their choices and actions. According to the lecture, existentialism has surprising origins in the life and ministry of Søren Kierkegaard, a 19th-century Christian thinker.

Kierkegaard, considered a Christian existentialist, recognized the limits of human reason and stressed the importance of personal faith and grappling with human dilemmas. While Kierkegaard's existentialism was rooted in Christianity, the movement in the 20th century largely became divorced from its Christian origins.

2. Who are the key representatives of existentialism discussed, and what were their contributions?

The lecture highlights three key figures: * **Søren Kierkegaard**: As the originator of Christian existentialism, Kierkegaard emphasized the limits of reason and the necessity of personal, subjective faith in the face of life's anxieties, exemplified in his work "Fear and Trembling." * **Rudolf Bultmann**: A New Testament scholar who applied existentialist hermeneutics to biblical interpretation. For Bultmann, sin was defined as "inauthentic existence," and salvation as "redeemed existence." He is also known for his concept of "demythologization," viewing biblical narratives like the resurrection not as literal historical events but as myths conveying existential truths about faith. * **Paul Tillich**: A theologian who used existentialist categories to interpret theology. Tillich believed that saving theology must address the problems of meaninglessness, despair, and anxiety in the modern world. He defined God as the "ground of our being," the one who overcomes "non-being" and provides authentic existence. However, later in life, Tillich viewed all religions as equally capable of answering humanity's fundamental questions.

3. What are some of the basic features or characteristics of existentialism as outlined in the lecture?

The lecture identifies four key features of existentialism: * **Centrality of Human Beings**: Existentialism, particularly in its post-Kierkegaardian form, is highly anthropocentric and subjective, focusing on individual experiences of meaninglessness, despair, and anxiety. * **Obscurity of God**: Unlike the imminent God of liberalism or the transcendent God of neo-orthodoxy, existentialism often presents an obscure or

incomprehensible God, sometimes described philosophically as the "ground of being," which is not easily relatable to the biblical understanding of God. * **Inevitability of Anxiety:** Existentialism posits that anxiety is an inherent part of the human condition in a world where meaning is not readily apparent, especially when God is seen as distant or unknowable. * **Goal of Authentic Existence:** The central aim of existentialism is to achieve authentic existence, though the definition of this varies. For Christian existentialists like Kierkegaard, it is tied to understanding God, while for atheistic existentialists, the path to authenticity becomes problematic and often loops back to anxiety and despair without a transcendent grounding.

4. What are some of the strengths or valuable insights that can be learned from existentialism? Despite its criticisms, the lecture points out several strengths of existentialism: * **Truth as Both Outward and Inward:** Existentialism reminds us that truth is not just objective and externally experienced but also involves inward, subjective understanding and personal experience. * **Recognition of Human Uniqueness:** It emphasizes the unique individuality of each person, cautioning against objectifying individuals and advocating for "I-thou" relationships as described by Martin Buber. * **Honesty About Belief:** Existentialism acknowledges the genuine difficulty many people face in believing in God and recognizes that religious practice can sometimes be superficial or habitual. * **Willingness to Face Life's Problems, Including Death:** It confronts difficult aspects of human existence, such as death, rather than avoiding them. * **Recognition of Meaningless Lives:** Existentialism acknowledges that many people live shallow and inauthentic lives, serving as a reminder of this human reality.

5. What are the main criticisms of existentialism presented in the lecture? The lecture also outlines several criticisms of existentialism: * **Humanism:** Post-Kierkegaardian existentialism often devolves into a form of humanism, placing humanity at the center rather than God. Theology should be God-centered. * **Failure to Understand Human Nature from God's Perspective:** Existentialism tends to analyze human existence from a subjective, human perspective, neglecting to understand who we are from the perspective of our creator. * **Neglect of Sin:** Existentialism largely ignores the concept of sin, including original sin and personal rebellion against God, which weakens its understanding of grace. * **Problematic View of the Bible:** Many existentialists either demythologize or outright ignore the Bible, failing to recognize its central role in providing answers to life's fundamental questions and potentially leading to further despair.

Ecumenism FAQ

6. What is ecumenism, and what were the primary reasons for the divided state of Protestantism that led to the ecumenical movement? Ecumenism, in the context of this lecture, refers to the movement towards unity among Christian denominations, primarily beginning within Protestantism. The lecture identifies four main reasons for the division within Protestantism at the beginning of the 20th century: * **Theological Divisions:** Disagreements and differing interpretations of theological doctrines led to significant separations. * **Social Divisions:** Social issues such as nationalism and ethical concerns, exemplified by the division over slavery in the 19th century, further fragmented Protestantism. * **Economic Divisions:** The disparity between wealthy and poor Protestants contributed to a sense of separation. * **Individualism:** An increasing emphasis on individualism and private faith in the Western world led to further divisions within Protestantism.

7. How did Protestants attempt to unify themselves through the ecumenical movement, and what were some key milestones or motivations? Protestants sought unity through the ecumenical movement by: * **Theological Reflection:** Grounding the call for unity in scripture, particularly Ephesians 4:4-6, which emphasizes the unity centered on Jesus Christ. * **Missionary Conscience:** Missionaries in the field recognized the counterproductive nature of denominational divisions and prioritized bringing people to Christ above promoting specific denominations. The 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, led by John Mott, was a crucial event. * **Addressing Social Problems and Secularism:** A growing awareness of global social issues and increasing secularization prompted Protestants to seek a unified voice and collective action. * **Impact of World War II:** The experience of facing tyranny, such as the Nazi regime, highlighted the need for a united Christian front against global injustices. Key institutional milestones include the formation of the **World Council of Churches in 1948** and the **National Council of Churches in 1950**, both initially conceived with strong biblical and theological intentions to foster unity among Protestant denominations.

8. What is the current state of the ecumenical movement according to the lecture, and what personal experience illustrates this? The lecture suggests that while the ecumenical movement began with noble theological intentions, the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches have, over time, drifted from their initial biblical loyalties. This shift has led to the formation of other more biblically centered groups. A personal anecdote from the lecturer recounts his participation in the North American Ecumenical Youth Assembly in 1960, an experience he found inspiring and enlightening despite the movement already beginning to broaden and, in his view, drift

somewhat. This experience exposed him to various Christian denominations and fostered a sense of unity, even as he notes the subsequent trajectory of the broader ecumenical movement.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer FAQ

1. Who was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and what was the historical context in which he lived?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian, and anti-Nazi dissident. He lived during the tumultuous period of the rise of Nazism in Germany and World War II. Born into a wealthy and well-established German family, he initially pursued a career in theology. The rise of Hitler and the Nazification of the Lutheran Church led Bonhoeffer to become a leader in the underground Confessing Church, which resisted the Nazi regime's influence over religious institutions.

2. What were some key aspects of Bonhoeffer's background that influenced his life and theology?

Several aspects of Bonhoeffer's background were influential: * **Privileged Upbringing:** His upbringing in a wealthy and intellectual family provided him with opportunities for education and exposure to various ideas. * **Theological Studies:** His decision to study theology, against the expectations of his family, shaped his intellectual and spiritual development. Karl Barth was one of his mentors. * **Pacifist Leanings:** Initially convinced of pacifism, this conviction was challenged by the extreme evil of the Nazi regime. * **Experience in America:** His time studying in America and his interactions with the black church in Harlem, particularly Franklin Fisher and the Abyssinian Baptist Church, exposed him to the realities of suffering and the church's role in addressing social injustices.

3. How did Bonhoeffer's theological convictions lead him to resist the Nazi regime, even to the point of involvement in a plot to assassinate Hitler? Bonhoeffer's theological understanding, particularly his ecclesiology, led him to resist the Nazi regime. He believed that the Nazi state had overstepped its legitimate boundaries and was no longer a government ordained by God. His earlier pacifist convictions were ultimately superseded by his conviction that the preservation of Western civilization and the protection of those suffering under Nazi oppression required action, including involvement in the plot to assassinate Hitler. He reached a point where he felt a moral obligation to actively oppose the tyranny.

4. What were some central themes in Bonhoeffer's theology, particularly his doctrine of the church (ecclesiology)?

Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology was a crucial aspect of his theology, emphasizing: * **The Church as Community:** He viewed the church not merely as a collection of individuals but as a vital community that stands over the individual,

offering care and support. He stressed that Christianity is personal but never private. *

Inseparable Relationship Between Church and Word: For Bonhoeffer, being in the church is synonymous with being in the Word of God, and vice versa. *

The Church's Role in the World: He argued that the church should not be a monastic entity separate from the world but should be actively involved in responsible action and sharing in the sufferings of the world, as he learned from the black church in America and applied to the plight of the Jews in Nazi Germany. *

The Concepts of Cheap Grace and Costly Grace: Bonhoeffer contrasted "cheap grace," which he saw as a superficial faith lacking sacrifice and commitment, with "costly grace," which involves taking the Word of God and the demands of discipleship seriously. His book *The Cost of Discipleship* elaborates on this theme, famously stating, "Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our church. We are fighting today for costly grace."